

Procedure Title	Professional Practice Placement for ELC
Associated Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 3 Programmes of Education and Training • Chapter 6 Assessment of Learners
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Purpose

To set out clear guidance to enable learners and tutors to carry out work placement within Professional Practice guidelines.

Scope

All Learners attending the advanced Certificate in Early Learning and Care 6M21471, Level 5 Certificate in Early Learning and Care 5M21473.

Professional Practice Placement requirements for Early Learning and Care 6M21471 award: Qualifications and Experience.

Importance of Professional Practice Placements

The Professional Award Type Descriptor (PATD) annotated for the ELC programme stipulate that Professional Practice Placements are integral to this programme and should ensure that learners have the opportunity to engage in meaningful work-integrated learning and assessment in a real world setting. Such opportunities must include:

1. Opportunities to observe experienced practitioners at work and to reflect on these observations.
2. Opportunities to integrate theory learned in the classroom into practice
3. Demonstrate their ability to apply knowledge and practice
4. Learn and implement competencies and knowledge that demonstrate best practice when working with babies, toddlers and young children while working under supervision
5. Engage in the practice of reflection and self-evaluation on their personal practice and engage in discussion with experienced practitioners so as to inform and to improve personal practice.

Professional Practice Placement Requirements

Each (full-time equivalent) learner to complete 150 hours of professional practice placement during both Stage 1 and Stage 2 of this programme. Placements must be taken in a minimum of 2 ELC settings as per the following guidelines:

1. Working directly with children aged between **0 and 2 years 8 months**.
2. Working directly with children aged between **2 years 8 months and 6 years**.

Stage 1: The following 5 modules require Professional Practice Placement

1. Professional Practice Placement in Early Learning and Care
2. Holistic Care of Children 0-6 Years
3. Early Childhood Growth and Development
4. Curriculum, Play and Creative Studies
5. Understanding and Assisting Children with Additional Needs

Stage 2: All modules require access to a Professional Practice Placement with access to appropriate age groups.

Note: During all professional practice placements, learners must have the opportunity to carry out some activities outdoors.

Selection of Placement Setting:

The placement setting must be a Tusla registered setting with an overall positive inspection report.

<https://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-providers/register-of-early-years-services-by-county/>

<https://www.tusla.ie/services/preschool-services/early-years-providers/early-years-inspection-reports/>

Prior to going on Professional Practice Placement:

Prior to starting Professional Practice Placement learners should have completed the following E-Learning:

- Introduction to Children First
- Children First Mandated Person

Timetabling of Professional Practice Placement:

Professional Practice Placement will be scheduled throughout the duration of the programme for both Stages 1 and 2. Learners must have the opportunity to carry out mandatory activities for all related modules to gain practical experience and learning. Criteria for Professional Practice Placement hours per module at stages 1 and 2 are set out in our validated programme.

All learners must complete the following before commencing Professional Practice Placement with the tutor:

- Professional Practice Placement in Early Learning and Care: To include Work place induction. This will be complete in the first 3 weeks of class, in order for the learner to start work placement in week 4.

- Early Childhood Growth and Development – to include the basics of developmentally appropriate practice, suitable for the learner to start work placement on week 4 of the programme.

It is the responsibility of the work place supervisor to ensure that the learner is fully inducted into the policies and procedures of the early years service. If the learner is completing work placement across multiple settings this induction must take place for each service.

Monitoring of Professional Practice Placements

Professional Practice Placement Monitors

The Professional Practice Placement Monitor is a member of LWL staff, suitably qualified and experienced in ELC, will be Garda vetted and have experience in the assessment of learners.

Professional Practice Placement Supervisors

The Professional Practice Placement Supervisor will be a member of the ELC host organisation and assigned to the supervision of the learner on placement. They will be suitably qualified at the NFQ level above that of the learner being supervised or will have appropriate experience/alternative qualifications. Although it is understood that the learner may be working in various settings with in early years services a qualified person must always be available to supervise the learner. This person may report to the professional practice placement supervisor who then reports to the monitor.

Full details of Professional Practice Placement guidelines can be found in the following documents:

1. Professional Practice Placement Guidelines: Learner Handbook
2. Professional Practice Placement Guidelines for ELC Host Organisations and ELC Supervisors

Supporting Documents:

LWL Selection Criteria for ELC Placement Service Checklist

Providers monitor and evaluation of ELC Service Checklist

Professional Practice Placement Guidelines for Learners Handbook – Stage 1 and 2

Professional Practice Placement Guidelines for ELC Host Organisations

Professional Practice Placement Supervisors Report Stage 1

Professional Practice Placement Supervisors Report Stage 2

Learner Handbook

Learner E Learning Certificate: Introduction to Children First

Children First Mandated Person